THE ENDLESS QUEST FOR TRUTH

THE SANCTUARY OF TRUTH

VOLUME NINE

GIOVANNI METRO STOP GALLERY

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Nestled within the northern suburbs of Pattaya, Thailand, lies a remarkable modern marvel that captivates the imagination: a temple and museum crafted entirely from wood sourced from the majestic teak forests of Northern Thailand.

This extraordinary creation is the brainchild of Lek Viriyaphan, a visionary Thai businessman who, disheartened by the detrimental effects of modernity on the spiritual essence of his homeland, sought to convey a profound

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message through his work.
With the wealth he amassed from the very secular world he criticized, Viriyaphan aimed to illustrate the transient nature of material pleasures, emphasizing that true worth is not measured by earthly possessions but rather by one's moral and spiritual integrity on the day of reckoning.
He envisioned this architectural masterpiece as a sanctuary for reflection, a place where individuals could contemplate the profound mysteries of existence while nurturing his

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aspiration to guide humanity toward an era of lasting peace and enlightenment.

TRAVEL TIPSTER(S)

Reaching the Sanctuary is relatively straightforward, but the return journey can be a bit more challenging. I recently traveled there on the Saturday Express Train, which offers a comfortable second-class air-conditioned experience with assigned seating.

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This special service operates exclusively on weekends, departing from Bangkok with minimal stops, making it a convenient option for travelers.

The train leaves early in the morning and returns at 4:25 PM, so it's advisable to secure your tickets at least two days in advance to ensure availability.

Alternatively, there is a regular train that runs daily and is significantly cheaper; however, it tends to be a much slower option. This standard third-class train makes frequent stops

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at every road crossing, and while it has its charm, with somewhat functional windows and the occasional overhead fan to provide relief from the heat, it can be a long journey. For those who value time and comfort, the Saturday Express is undoubtedly the better choice.

The Pattaya Train Station stands out as one of the most pleasant railway hubs I have encountered, largely due to the evident dedication of the station master, who takes immense pride in maintaining its charm and cleanliness.

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This attention to detail creates a welcoming atmosphere where travelers can comfortably sit, reflect, or simply enjoy a moment of tranquility.

Adding to the station's appeal is a quaint little shop, managed by a genuinely friendly woman, who offers a selection of refreshing drinks and tasty snacks to make your wait more enjoyable.

Furthermore, the station is designed to be accessible for individuals with disabilities, which is commendable;

however, it is unfortunate that the trains themselves do not share this level of accessibility.

Overall, the Pattaya Train Station is not just a transit point but a delightful space that enhances the travel experience.

The train pulls into the station around 9:20 AM, marking the beginning of your adventure.

As you step outside, you'll be greeted by a cluster of minibuses ready to whisk you into the heart of the town. Among them, you'll find one that heads directly to the

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Sanctuary, a destination that many travelers seek. If you're unsure which bus to take, simply ask the drivers; they are generally friendly and eager to assist, although their English may be limited.

To ensure a smooth journey, it's wise to have the name of the Sanctuary written in Thai, which you can present to the driver. This small preparation can save you time and potential confusion, allowing you to focus on the excitement of your visit.

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When confirming the price, it is important to do so politely. I found that the fare was 100 Baht per person, which included a prompt delivery right to the doorstep after a journey of approximately 20 minutes.
For those who prefer a more modern approach, using the Grab app for private taxi services is an excellent option. However, be aware that the cost for a similar trip through Grab is around 300 Baht, which is significantly higher than the fare I paid.

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The entrance fee to the Sanctuary is set at 500 Baht for all visitors, as the venue does not implement a dual pricing system seen at other locations in the region.

To enhance accessibility, especially for seniors and those who may find the terrain challenging, a complimentary golf cart shuttle is available, providing a convenient ride that eliminates the need for a lengthy downhill trek to reach the Sanctuary's main area.

While many of you may already be familiar with the venue's

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safety protocols, such as the requirement to wear a hard hat, which has been widely featured in various Yobbie Tubbee videos, it's worth emphasizing the unique experience that awaits you.

The Sanctuary offers a captivating environment that is both enriching and enjoyable, making the entrance fee a worthwhile investment for an unforgettable visit.

While standard cameras are permitted, the use of commercial-grade video equipment and the reckless

behavior of internet influencers without prior authorization is strictly prohibited.

This concern is underlined by recent incidents where individuals have attempted to operate drones in crowded areas, causing disruption and distress among locals.

As a photographer, it is crucial you respect the boundaries and privacy of the community, as the careless actions of a few can lead to broader restrictions that affect everyone getting banned.

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The food stalls were impressively clean, and the quality of the dishes offered was quite commendable; however, I found the prices to be slightly steep for someone like me, who is traveling on a "Hobo Tourist" budget.
Despite this, I must highlight the exceptional Coconut smoothie they serve, which is a refreshing delight that truly stands out among the offerings.
Getting to your destination may be straightforward, but the return journey can present more challenges.

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While you might find yourself waiting for a minibus to pass by, which could potentially pick up a few passengers, this is far from guaranteed.
I noticed a handful of motorcycle taxis stationed near the main entrance, but regular taxis were noticeably absent.
However, there's a helpful tip for those in need of a ride: just off to the side parking lot near the exit, an elderly gentleman holds a small sign that reads "taxi."
He was able to call us a taxi that operated similarly to Grab,

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and we only had to wait about five minutes for it to arrive. The fare was set at 300 Baht, which is quite reasonable, especially if you're traveling with a group of friends. If you happen to have the Grab app on your phone, though, you might find that option even more convenient.

- Emil, 2025

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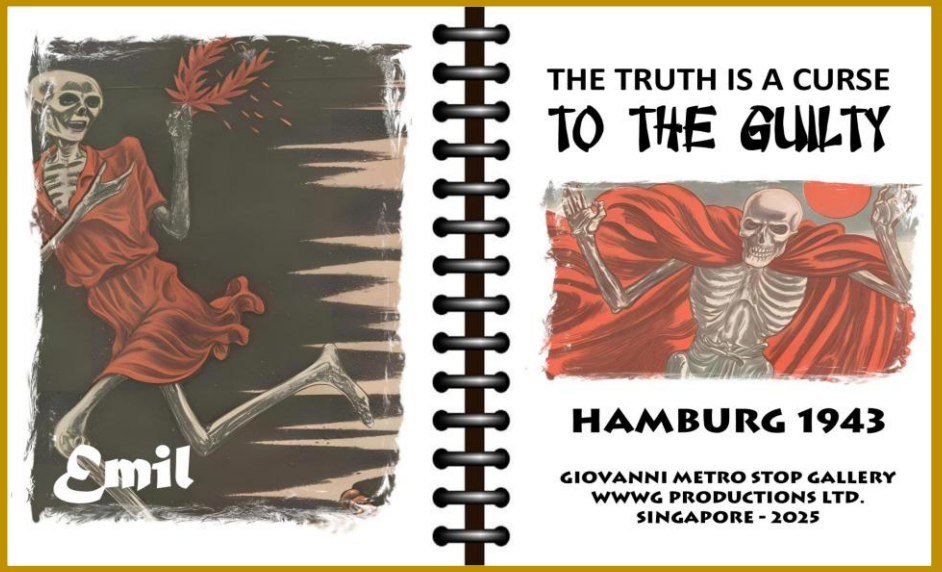
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